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Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the sixty-first session

Requests for observer status in the General Assembly

Letter dated 8 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of an additional item entitled "Requests for observer status in the General Assembly".

In view of the legal nature of the issue, I believe it would be appropriate to allocate the item to the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly.

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, this request is accompanied by an explanatory memorandum (see annex).

(*Signed*) Christian **Wenaweser**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Explanatory memorandum

The General Committee of the sixty-first session has before it, once again, requests for the inclusion of agenda items related to the granting of observer status in the General Assembly (A/61/141 and A/61/191). Agenda items relating to this issue are allocated to the Sixth Committee, which then deals with the substance of the matter. In fact, dealing with the question of observer status has become a standard activity of the Sixth Committee.

The current practice of including a specific agenda item for every single organization requesting observer status in the General Assembly seems unnecessarily burdensome and bureaucratic. On a number of occasions in the past, the General Committee had to schedule a separate meeting for no other purpose than the inclusion of such a specific agenda item, which is mainly administrative in nature.

The Liechtenstein delegation notes that many other delegations have criticized this practice. In the spirit of revitalization of the General Assembly and its working methods, it would indeed be simpler if the Sixth Committee could deal with the merits of such requests directly, without the need to involve the General Committee in every single such request.

The Liechtenstein delegation therefore submits a request to include a generic item on this matter in the agenda of the General Assembly, and to allocate it to the Sixth Committee.

The generic agenda item would be entitled "Requests for observer status in the General Assembly". It would replace, for the sixty-first session, the two related items requested for inclusion in the agenda (A/61/141 and A/61/191), and make it unnecessary in the future to bring specific requests for observer status to the General Committee. Such requests would have to be brought to the attention of the Sixth Committee directly.

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